Changing the world through food

Wholesome Wave
2015 ANNUAL REPORT
“We can’t rest until every single American can afford the most essential ingredients to a healthy diet: fruits and vegetables.”

—Michel Nischan, Founder & CEO
As I look back at 2015 and forward to the future, I’m struck with two realizations: We’ve accomplished so much. And we’ve got so much to do.

The past year was a time of significant growth for Wholesome Wave. We won inaugural funding from the USDA’s Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive program, the first fruits of the $100 million federal investment that we helped trigger in the 2014 Farm Bill, supporting organizations running nutrition incentives across the country. This grant dramatically diversified our funding sources while providing significant funds to support affordable access to fresh produce throughout our field. We put our share to great use, scaling nutrition incentives from coast to coast.

We also expanded our Fruit and Vegetable Prescription Program®, a simple-but-powerful concept poised to radically transform healthcare. And with our eyes on the horizon, we took nutrition incentives beyond farmers markets and into the place where most Americans buy food: grocery stores.

I’m enormously proud of what our staff has accomplished, yet at nine years in, I know we’re just getting started. As we close in on a decade, it’s time for Wholesome Wave to go from reaching hundreds of thousands of people to millions. From working at seasonal, weekly farmers markets, to transforming purchasing power everywhere, including major grocers and corner stores. We can’t rest until every single American can afford the most essential ingredients to a healthy diet: fruits and vegetables.

Tens of millions of Americans struggle to put dinner on the table each night. And when the cheapest choice is also the least healthful, is it any surprise we’re battling epidemic rates of diet-related disease? With nine years under our belt, we are acutely aware that nearly everyone wants to feed their family well. We’ve also proven, time and again, that when local produce is affordable, people buy it. Their diets change overnight, and the positive impacts ripple out across local farms, regional economies and public health. This is why we do what we do.

I hope you sink your teeth into these pages, see the meaningful change we’re creating and become inspired to help us grow. In the meantime, I’ll get back to work. We’ve got a lot to do!

In this Annual Report you will read about many of Wholesome Wave’s outsize achievements in 2015, but here’s one I am particularly proud of: the James Beard Foundation, whose annual awards are the “Oscars/Emmys of the Food World,” honored my partner, dear friend and Wholesome Wave Founder and CEO Michel Nischan as Humanitarian of the Year. To put things in perspective, past honorees include industry luminaries such as Wolfgang Puck, Alice Waters, Danny Meyer, Emeril Lagasse and one of this organization’s original partners, Paul Newman.

To work with Michel is to know how appropriate this honor is. He is a tireless visionary. Tireless as in: Nashville meetings Monday, DC roundtable Wednesday, Jack Johnson Hawaiian fundraiser Friday, jam-packed days in the Bridgeport office in between. Throw in some serious early morning workouts, backyard bluegrass sessions at sunset and dinners of roast chicken or wild salmon alongside carrots and arugula from his enormous backyard garden. And visionary as in: taking the road less traveled and forging a unique yet so simple and revolutionary idea to address food-access inadequacies in this country: that if we simply make local produce affordable, people will buy it, cook it and eat it, resulting in real reductions in metrics like blood sugar and BMI. But wait, there’s more—benefits across agricultural economies and public health. In other words, as this report is so aptly named: Changing the World Through Food.

But don’t take my word for it. When the Beard Foundation honored Michel, José Andrés had the pleasure of introducing him on stage. As José put it: “Michel has led a life dedicated to others. And for more than 30 years he has worked tirelessly to feed people healthy and wholesome meals. He believes that everyone from all walks of life deserves a good meal and that food—where it comes from, how we prepare it, how we eat it—it’s all interconnected. He’s often heard saying that food can fix anything and he’s proving it with his organization, Wholesome Wave. When others see a problem, he only sees opportunity. And where others see disrepair he only sees a horizon of hope that will bring better food to everybody. I’m lucky to call this man a friend. I know he’s changing the way America will feed itself in the years to come.”

Which is what Wholesome Wave is all about.

Michel Nischan
Founder & CEO

Andrew Hertzmark
Board Chair
OUR VISION
Affordable, healthy, local food for all.

OUR MISSION
We empower under-served consumers to make healthier food choices by increasing affordable access to fresh, local, and regional food.

OUR BELIEF
Poverty should never be an obstacle to eating fruits and vegetables.
WHY

45M Americans rely on SNAP. An additional 21.7M are food insecure. Unfortunately, the cheapest food choices are also the unhealthiest. It’s no surprise the nation spends $500B on diet-related illnesses each year. But when produce is made affordable, people buy it. Diets change overnight and enormous positive outcomes follow for public health, local economies and the environment.

HOW

Wholesome Wave unlocks affordability by:

- Increasing the value of food stamps and other nutrition benefits when spent on fruits & vegetables.
- Working with healthcare providers to write prescriptions for fruits & vegetables.
- Leading a national network of researchers, community-based nonprofits, and program operators to share best practices to change the world through food.
- Activating demand for fresh produce to create market opportunities and improve the bottom lines for farmers and grocery stores nationwide.

OUR IMPACT

We address America’s dietary crisis by making fruits and vegetables affordable in under-served communities.

We played a key role in triggering the first national, federally funded nutrition incentive program in history (FINI), resulting in $100 Million in the 2014 Farm Bill for nutrition incentives nationally.

We’re growing our network of 650+ farmers markets and retailers in 38 states and counting.

OPPORTUNITY FOR CHANGE

45M Americans spend about $70B in SNAP, plus roughly $63B of their own money on food = $133B!

We are working to shift how that money is spent nationwide.

- Unlock healthier choices → public health improves.
- Local economies thrive because every dollar spent benefits the farmer, the retailer, the distributor and the customer.
- Wholesome Wave strives to make this happen in 50 states.

WHEN YOU GIVE

With a gift to Wholesome Wave...

$1

buys two servings of fresh fruits and vegetables.

$100

buys fruit and vegetable prescriptions for a family of 4 for 1 month.

$2,500

provides a serving of carrots to 12,000 children.
The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly known as food stamps, has an annual federal budget of about $74 billion. Individuals relying on SNAP receive about $4 a day, which can be spent on grocery items from milk to produce to soda. Until recently, most farmers markets lacked the technology to process SNAP; now, as a result of our early work with the USDA, thousands can accept it. Wholesome Wave sees an enormous opportunity to shift SNAP spending towards local fruits and vegetables, which is what nutrition incentives are all about.
FINI, short for the USDA’s Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive Grant Program, is a $100 million grant program which supports nutrition incentive projects that increase the purchase of produce among Americans who rely on SNAP. In 2015, Wholesome Wave received $3.77 million through this grant program. With private matching funds doubling its impact, this amounted to a $7.4 million investment in helping thousands of low-income Americans afford produce.

**So, what are nutrition incentives exactly?**

**Good question.**

**Name that acronym:**

FINI

**nu-tri-tion in-cen-tive** (n۸ʊ-tri-ˈtʃən ɪn-ˈsɛn-tɪv) n.

1. Alternative currency, in the form of a coupon, token or electronic voucher, that can be spent on produce at farmers markets and grocery stores.
2. A catalyst for healthy food purchases that makes it easier for low-income Americans to buy fruits and vegetables.
3. How Wholesome Wave is changing the world through food.

Example: At the Bridgeport farmers market, Alicia spent $10 in SNAP and received an additional $10 in nutrition incentives to spend on produce like green beans and peaches, which she fed her children that evening.
45 M
AMERICANS
RELY ON SNAP
an ADDITIONAL
21.7M
are FOOD INSECURE*
633
FARMERS MARKETS
6,068
FARMERS
16
GROCERY STORES
14
HOSPITALS & CLINICS

RIPE FOR CHANGE

Our Impact in 2015

$133B
AMOUNT SPENT by
LOW-INCOME AMERICANS
on GROCERIES ANNually

*People whose incomes are too high to qualify for SNAP but remain food insecure.
A network with members in
38 STATES + DC and NAVAJO NATION

Through a loan guarantee to a food hub, we supported
$2.25 MILLION in LOCAL PRODUCE SOLD

over 150,000
Low-income Americans Eating Healthier

$3.6 MILLION IN SNAP AND INCENTIVES SPENT ON PRODUCE

2.12 MILLION LBS OF PRODUCE PURCHASED

Photo by Abe Draper
decade ago, only two market operators in the country were matching SNAP. When Wholesome Wave launched, we were the first organization to enhance and replicate that approach nationally. We created the environment and space for incentives to flourish and demand sky-rocketed. In the nine years since, we’ve established SNAP-doubling programs in 38 states. While we’re still helping organizations nationwide launch and expand nutrition incentive programs, we realized we needed to raise the bar in a way that could scale these programs significantly. Now we convene a national network, and reach more SNAP consumers while benefiting more farmers, and changing the world through food. Here are just a few examples of:
Our work on the ground

Photo by Adam Komich
Use SNAP/EBT at the Belfast Co-op & get bonus local fruit and vegetables!

SHOP:
123 High Street
Belfast, Maine
www.belfast.coop
Open 7:30AM-8PM everyday

QUESTIONS? GO TO:
MaineHarvestBucks.org/retail

CONTACT:
Shannon@maineharvestbuck.org/retail

807.338.6573
We've established SNAP-doubling programs at many markets in many states, under many names and systems. And while that individual growth is great, organized growth can be an even more powerful force for change.

It quickly became clear that success in the Farm Bill would only mean success in the field if individual organizations could work together as effective networks. Independent stand-alone programs with limited resources shoulder their own marketing and administrative burdens, and risk duplicating efforts or reinventing wheels. Unifying these programs harnesses the power in economies of scale and fosters operating efficiencies, while offering consistent marketing to reach SNAP consumers statewide. We call it working smarter.

This realization sparked energy to expand our work by helping build effective networks. Up in Maine, for example, we saw duplication in programming and competition among community-based nonprofits. We knew that helping them join forces would make these groups more competitive for federal funds—and more impactful overall. Local donors funded us to assess the potential for statewide impact, and then we helped the organizations architect their programs into a statewide network.

It worked. Four years ago, Maine was home to eight different nutrition incentive programs; today we are proud to have helped unify them under one mighty statewide umbrella. The Maine Local Foods Access Network was born in 2013, and today it coordinates incentive programs at farmers markets, mobile markets, CSAs, food hubs, farm stands, and even brick-and-mortar retail stores.

Joining forces can be challenging, but the results are worth the work. Maine SNAP sales have tripled since 2011. And the Maine Network saw enormous growth in 2015, adding 15 new sites for a total of 41, with continued growth projected for 2016.

This success led to an invitation by New Hampshire and Virginia donors to replicate the success in their states.

But success isn’t just about numbers. Farmers and shoppers are reaping the benefits from the unified network and its increased reach. Terry Moffit, a farmer and market manager at Calais Farmers’ Market, is one of many who have seen the program’s impact firsthand.

"I had a patron approach me rather shyly about whether or not it was true she could literally double her purchases," he says. "I said a resounding, 'Yes!' She almost cried."
HARLEM, NYC—Before she turned 10, Alaijah was overweight and suffering from asthma. Trips to the gym were futile, since exercise always triggered asthma attacks. Doctors had prescribed an inhaler as well as daily steroid treatments. In 2012, Dr. Sundari Periasamy, a pediatrician at Harlem Hospital Center, had a new prescription for Alaijah: fresh fruits and vegetables. “The doctor said, ‘Listen, you will be able to take this prescription to the farmers market and get vouchers for fruits and vegetables,’” recalls Alaijah’s mother, Sheryl Browne. “At first I was skeptical, but I accepted it because it was a new option.”

Between 2012 and 2015, Wholesome Wave’s innovative Fruit and Vegetable Prescription (FVRx) Program® NYC reached 2,755 patients and household members and resulted in decreased BMI for 42.6 percent of all patients who completed the intervention. Over three years, $185,000 was spent at NYC farmers markets through the program. For Alaijah, the results were life-changing. “The very first year, she lost weight,” Browne says happily. “The second year, not only did she lose weight, she didn’t need to take her steroids every day. She is so active now—it is such a total difference. She plays volleyball, soccer, swimming. She is now a cheerleader, and not just a cheerleader, she’s actually a flyer.”

Fresh fruits and vegetables had been too expensive for Sheryl to buy regularly, so thanks to FVRx, she started taking all four of her children to the weekly farmers market. The kids enjoyed picking out produce and chatting with the farmers about recipes for everything from apricots to purple string beans. Alaijah wants to be a chef when she grows up, and Browne’s son, who is only three, prefers fresh fruit to sweets. The simple act of making produce affordable has reversed their health outcomes. “It wasn’t just, ‘let’s make your daughter not fat,’ it was ‘let’s make your whole family healthy,’” Browne says. Today she says her kids don’t ask for chips anymore. They ask for kale instead.
MIAMI, FL—Farmers market managers offering nutrition incentives have almost as many tasks to juggle as there are types of tomatoes. From setting up tents, to conducting cooking demonstrations to settling vendor disputes, Managers often find themselves neglecting one of the most important components of a successful incentive program: time-consuming data collection essential to evaluating success and advocating for funding.

Wholesome Wave has an app for that! Across the country more than 300 markets are now using our “FM Tracks” software to gather nutrition incentive data in real time. The app lightens the workload for market managers while building a treasure trove of data that’s valuable for demonstrating program impact to press, policymakers and donors alike. Developed in partnership with Case Western Reserve University, with funding from the Ohio Department of Health, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the National Institutes for Health, FM Tracks simplifies the data collection and evaluation process for markets funded through FINI, while providing helpful in-depth reporting tools and real-time information on market performance and trends.

But don’t take our word for it. Carmen Franz, who manages the Fresh Access Bucks program at 26 markets for Florida Organic Growers (FOG), says the software has been a huge help. “[FM Tracks] saves each market manager at least one to three hours weekly on data entry,” she raves. “We never would have been able to pull off what FM Tracks can do, financially or staff wise.”

To further enhance the software design and benefits, Franz and her FOG colleagues tapped Wholesome Wave for invaluable technical assistance.

“As a network we are pretty low-capacity,” says Franz, “so having Wholesome Wave work with the app developer and deal with that whole side of things was absolutely critical for us. That was major for us to have Wholesome Wave take this lead, and we definitely feel the cost-savings and the time-savings.”

As a result, Florida Organic Growers was able to spend just 6 percent of their FINI Grant budget on evaluation—creating financial savings they put directly back into the program.

In 2015, markets running Fresh Access Bucks represented just 26 of the total 313 markets entering data, for a total of 39,126 transactions recorded through the app. And in 2016, we’re hoping to open its use up beyond FINI grantees, to every market in the network, allowing more managers to spend their time on what they do best—helping sell all those varieties of tomatoes.

**There’s an app for that!**

**Tech-knowledge-y.**

Developed in partnership with the likes of the Centers for Disease Control and the National Institutes for Health, our “FM Tracks” software gathers data in real time, lightening the workload for market managers while aggregating data that demonstrates impact.

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**DATA COLLECTION:**

**Having Wholesome Wave work with the app developer and deal with that whole side of things is absolutely critical for us. That was major for us to have Wholesome Wave take this lead, and we definitely feel the cost-savings and the time-savings.**

—Carmen Franz, Florida Organic Growers
NAVAJO NATION—In the Navajo story of creation, the First Man and Woman emerged into the world alongside the first kernels of corn. But in Navajo Nation today, corn and other produce are nearly impossible to find. Over 75% of the Navajo population struggles to put food on the table, Native Americans are 60% more likely than whites to be obese, and the USDA has designated nearly all 27,000 square miles of Navajo Nation as a food desert.

Enter Wholesome Wave.

In 2015 we partnered with Community Outreach and Patient Empowerment (COPE), to launch a three-year Fruit and Vegetable Prescription (FVRx) Program®. Participating healthcare providers at Community Health Centers treat patients battling diet-related disease by writing a prescription for fresh fruits and vegetables for the whole family.

But for patients here on Navajo Nation, where diabetes is an epidemic, redeeming those prescriptions is far from simple. For many residents, groceries are a three-hour round trip drive away, and many households have no car.

We’re innovating against these challenges, and building networks of local partners to help gas stations and trading posts stock fresh produce, thus creating supply chain opportunities to meet the miracle of demand created by providing affordability. Rather than providing the usual bananas and potatoes found in most corner stores, we’re providing produce that’s fresh, healthy, culturally appropriate and locally grown. To that end, we support a mobile farmers market that lets local crops travel to customers, instead of the other way around.

Connette Blair’s Toosoh Trading post, in the town of Lukachukai, is the only store for many miles around. It serves as a one-stop shop for cleaning supplies, canned goods, roasted piñons and now vegetable prescriptions. Before FVRx came to town, Blair was dismayed to see processed food take center stage on her shelves.

“We sell a lot of lunch meat, bologna, cheese, chips,” Blair admits. “The chip delivery guy comes three times a week,” she says. But thanks to FVRx, she’s offering more fresh produce, too. Several times a week, Blair drives 75 miles each way to purchase products for her store.

“I’ll buy frozen corn, fresh corn, salad, cucumbers, bell peppers, chilies,” says Blair happily. “We’ve got cantaloupe, watermelon, honeydew, cassavas, strawberries, blueberries and grapes.”

Marinda, a Navajo Nation mother of two young girls, says FVRx has changed the way her family eats.

“With the program, I get to give my girls fresh fruits and vegetables,” Marinda says. “This summer we got to eat cantaloupes and berries. [In the past we couldn’t] afford all the ingredients, but now we can.”

At the Trading Post, Blair has become an enthusiastic FVRx champion, organizing cooking classes and recipe swaps. She even helps some customers with transportation. She knows that the journey to better community health can’t be undertaken alone.

“I want to encourage these families to come together,” Blair says. “Come and let’s exchange recipes and meet each other. I’ll tell you right now, Navajos don’t work alone. With this program, you can bring whoever you need. I want everybody to get involved.”
COLUMBUS, OH—Dreaming big—that’s how Amy Baskes, manager of Veggie SNAPS, describes the mindset among Ohio’s nutrition incentive programs since Wholesome Wave began working there several years ago.

Each of Ohio’s three largest cities—Columbus, Cincinnati and Cleveland—is home to a nutrition incentive program, but until two years ago there was no coordination or communication between the three. That changed when Wholesome Wave began partnering with all three programs, including Veggie SNAPS, with support from the Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive Program.

“Even applying to the FINI grant was something that wouldn’t have been possible for us without Wholesome Wave’s help,” says Baskes, whose Veggie SNAPS nutrition incentive program serves central Ohio, including Columbus. “They brought momentum and clout to our discussions and allowed us to think big. We knew, and our funders knew, that Wholesome Wave had been at the table in Farm Bill discussions even before FINI was created, and they had experience running statewide nutrition incentive programs.”

Now, that three-year FINI grant is funding the expansion of programs in Columbus, Cincinnati and Cleveland as well as the development of a statewide network.

“There’s efficiency in the notion that we are operating one program and we don’t all have to invent our own marketing and branding, training manuals and workshops,” Baskes explains. “There’s efficiency and capacity that appeals to everyone who is running these programs, and together we would have the ability to leverage greater investments and ultimately serve more residents.”

Veggie SNAPS has already doubled the number of farmers markets they serve in Columbus, from 6 to 12; 49 markets now offer incentives across Ohio. The famous, bustling Pearl Market in downtown Columbus began offering incentives in 2015, allowing SNAP customers to double their fruit and vegetable purchasing power. One Tuesday afternoon, a Columbus resident named Robin took advantage of the program while on the hunt for onions and peppers. In the summer months, she chooses the market over the grocery store.

“I can double my money here, and I know it is wholesomely grown and healthier,” she said. “I think it’s just an amazing, amazing thing.”

In a few more years, SNAP shoppers like Robin might be able to double their SNAP dollars at grocery stores, making access to affordable healthy food more convenient. Veggie SNAPS is piloting a retail outlet location later this year as well as a Fruit and Vegetable Prescription (FVRx) Program® and a mobile market.

“Since we started partnering with Wholesome Wave,” Baskes says, “dreaming big has been baked into how we operate.”

Even applying to the FINI grant was something that wouldn’t have been possible for us without Wholesome Wave’s help, they brought momentum and clout to our discussions and allowed us to think big.

— Amy Baskes, Veggie SNAPS
“We started telling people they could buy fruits and vegetables instead of a bag of chips. It would be much healthier and be a better deal.”

– Jeffrey Perez, Hartford CTown

Aisles of opportunity.
While we grow our work in farmers markets nationwide, this tiny-but-mighty pilot represents enormous potential. Partnering with supermarkets will allow us to scale our impact and eventually make produce more affordable for millions of Americans.
HARTFORD, CT—“Our produce sales have increased 8 or 9 percent!” raves Jeffrey Perez, general manager of the CTown supermarket here.

He’s marveling at the spike in fruit and vegetable sales from the SNAP UP! program.

Perez, 27, started learning the grocery business from his father when he was just 10 years old. The largely low-income Latino community they serve includes many SNAP shoppers who couldn’t afford much fresh produce—until now.

Through Wholesome Wave’s work, and funding from the Leon Lowenstein Foundation, SNAP shoppers here who spend at least $10 and purchase produce now receive a $5 voucher to buy additional fruits and vegetables.

The response has been staggering—including an impressive increase in overall SNAP sales of fruits and vegetables beyond the incentive amount.

But in the beginning it was his waistline, not his bottom line, that led Perez to SNAP UP!

“My father and all my cousins and I were trying to eat healthier and lose weight,” says Perez. “Then we learned about this program as a way for our customers to eat healthier, too. We started telling people they could buy fruits and vegetables instead of a bag of chips. It would be much healthier and be a better deal, thanks to the vouchers.”

To implement this innovative approach, Wholesome Wave and our local partner, Hartford Food System, laid the groundwork throughout 2015 by providing customer surveys, training information and marketing materials in English and Spanish. Perez says all that prep paid off.

“We felt comfortable from the get-go—Wholesome Wave and Hartford Food System made it seem like it was the right thing, and it was. It’s a positive thing for the community—and for our business.”

With affordability unlocked, sales have soared—especially of ingredients like cilantro and chili peppers. Spanish is the first language for 85 percent of Perez’s customers, and he says it’s crucial for these foods to be affordable, not only because they are culturally prized but because they allow families to season dishes with fresh ingredients instead of salt.

And it’s not only C-Town’s sales that will be soaring. This tiny-but-mighty pilot is just the tip of the iceberg.

A 2013 study found that farmers markets came seventh on a list of places where Americans buy groceries. So while Wholesome Wave continues to increase affordability at farmers markets nationwide, this supermarket strategy will allow us to serve far more families, and ultimately scale up from reaching hundreds of thousands, to millions of consumers struggling with poverty.

Today Perez can barely keep enough fresh food in stock. “Before we started the program, we were buying from just two produce companies,” he says. “And now we have to buy produce from four companies to meet the demand.”
In Jackson, Mississippi, a Homegrown Hero

JACKSON, MS—Dr. Cindy Ayers is a Mississippi native, but she didn’t always raise vegetables, cattle, goats and fish. Fifteen years ago, she was an investment banker in New York City.

“Before, I was a suit-wearing, nails-and-hair-perfect, city slicker,” she says. “Now I have the most beautiful hats and work boots.”

But for Ayers, the move back to the land was about more than raising food: She wanted to raise up her community as well. She took a hard look at Mississippi’s food access and public health statistics and decided she couldn’t wait for someone else to fix things. Today she’s CEO of Foot Print Farms, a 68-acre urban farm in Jackson that’s a hub for a host of solution-minded projects, from a business incubator for young farmers to a fresh fruit and vegetable prescription program and a CSA called Farm to Faith that delivers weekly harvest shares to four Jackson churches.

In 2015, Ayers and her CSA customers got some great news when AARP Foundation launched Fre$h Savings, a nutrition incentive program. They engaged Wholesome Wave to launch program operations at 11 farmers markets in Tennessee and 5 markets in Mississippi. At these markets, SNAP participants who spend $10 on fresh fruits and vegetables have their purchasing power doubled. With a staff member stationed in Nashville, Wholesome Wave provides hands-on operational support to increase overall impact throughout Tennessee and Mississippi.

With Fre$h Savings in place, Ayers rallied members of Jackson churches to come to the farmers market, where they can shop with SNAP, start healthful habits and double their purchasing power. The result: Overall market traffic is way up, and over 250 SNAP customers are loading up on exactly what their families need: fresh produce. And Fre$h Savings isn’t just good for customers. It’s also helping to grow Foot Print Farms.

“Thanks to this program,” raves Ayers, “I have an outlet for all of the food that we grow. But more than that, it has allowed me to bring more fresh, local food to my community, and that’s what’s really important to me.”
For years, Wholesome Wave has made produce more affordable with market tokens and produce-prescription pads, and this year we’ve added selfies and hashtags to the mix. That’s because we teamed up with Naked Juice on the #DrinkGoodDoGood campaign to raise both awareness of food deserts—and the funding to fight them. For every fruit or veggie selfie shared using #DrinkGoodDoGood, Naked Juice donated the equivalent of 10 pounds of produce to Wholesome Wave.

The cause campaign quickly garnered support from locally loved and nationally known influencers and celebrities across the country, including the likes of actor and philanthropist Adrian Grenier, board-member chefs José Andrés and Tom Colicchio and artist and actor Common, among many more. Plus, Ellen DeGeneres and Kim Kardashian, whose “do good” selfie sparked an Instagram trend. The campaign even inspired legendary chef Jacques Pépin to start an Instagram account so he could participate, too.

With the overwhelming support of consumers and ambassadors alike, more than 50,000 #DrinkGoodDoGood selfies were shared, generating 500,000 pounds of fresh produce. There were also more than one million views of the campaign website DrinkGoodDoGood.com, helping to further drive awareness of the issue and what we were doing to help.

Naked Juice’s contribution didn’t just fund our work nationwide—it provided crucial matching funds for our $3.77 million FINI grant from USDA, compounding the campaign’s overall impact.

“Wholesome Wave and Naked Juice share a similar vision—that everyone deserves affordable, quality, fresh fruits and vegetables,” said Nora Quartaro, Director, Public Relations at Naked Juice. “Together, we’ve donated nearly two million pounds’ worth of fruits and vegetables to communities in need, and brought awareness to this very important cause.”
Milwaukee, WI—Forget garden variety tomatoes or state fair cheese curds. At the Fondy Farmers Market here on the city’s north side, you can buy sweet potato leaves, squash vines and 13 different varieties of eggplant.

The veritable produce cornucopia reflects the farmers, who are largely Hmong, and the diverse community, which is predominantly African American. Here at the market, boasting “welcome” signs in many languages, people from around the world and across income levels are drawn together for one reason: to feed their families well.

Fondy was one of the first markets in the nation to accept SNAP benefits, and in 2015 they were a partner on Wholesome Wave’s FINI grant, which furnished $10,000 to Fondy’s nutrition incentive program, Market Match. The program was so popular, customers spent the whole $10,000 on fruits and vegetables in a matter of weeks. Fondy and Wholesome Wave then raised an additional $30,000 for Market Match, which customers also redeemed faster than you can say “affordable access.”

Jennifer Casey, executive director of Fondy Food Center, which manages the market, says joining forces with Wholesome Wave took their nutrition incentive work to the next level.

“The resources we get from Wholesome Wave are phenomenal. Not just the access to national grants, but the training and the other resources, like [the data-tracking app] FM Tracks,” Casey raves. “Having access to their staff allows us to pose questions, and being connected to the National Nutrition Incentive Network is a great way to learn and share.”

So much so that in 2015 Fondy Food Center also collaborated with Wholesome Wave on a resource titled “Fostering a Culture of Inclusivity at Your Market,” which has since been shared with other network member markets across the country.

“Fondy Market is one of the most culturally diverse places, in one of the most segregated cities,” says Casey. “Milwaukee has struggled with segregation and the inequities that come with that, but at Fondy you find neighbors working together, sharing resources and recipes.”
Our Summit
A MEETING OF THE MINDS

ATLANTA, GA—Wholesome Wave ended the year 2015, and kicked-off 2016 with our Transforming Food Access Summit: Accelerating Affordability with Nutrition Incentives. We convened over 300 speakers and attendees from 28 states and DC, representing government, academia, business, health care, agriculture and beyond. The purpose: To explore how scaling nutrition incentives can transform food access. The summit’s hashtag was also its mission: #FixFood.

Together, attendees parsed some of the food system’s most pressing issues and shared best practices for national network programming, local program design and sustainability. The three days were packed with knowledge sharing and presentations that outlined challenges and action steps for change. The 75 breakout presenters and 34 plenary panelists included a diverse array of national leaders hailing from institutions such the CDC, AARP Foundation, the United Fresh Produce Association and the National WIC Association.

Our CEO Michel Nischan summed up the spirit well: “The Summit provided an opportunity to be reminded of why we do what we do, how awesome the people are who we work with in the field, and how successful we’ve been in working to change the world we eat in.”

Our policy staff built on this energy by convening over 15 attendees in an invitation-only roundtable on strategy for protecting and expanding FINI funding in the next Farm Bill. This participatory session set the groundwork for successful network-wide advocacy in the new year—a crucial outcome supporting sustainability of nutrition incentives through policy change. Partnerships were strengthened and coordinated engagement continues in preparation for the upcoming Farm Bill.

And social media offered a platform for followers to extend the conversation across the country with hundreds of summit-related tweets and re-tweets popping up over the three days. Modern Farmer’s media sponsorship contributed to a combined Twitter and Instagram audience of over 70,000. All in all, the #FixFood hashtag reached 857,747 people with a storm of engagement across all platforms.

Attendees left the summit activated to make change, and with the tools to do so. Network member DC Greens tweeted: “Thank you @wholesomewave for an energizing and collaborative summit! We’re carrying lots of momentum back to DC! #FixFood.”

“The Summit provided an opportunity to be reminded of why we do what we do, how awesome the people are who we work with in the field, and how successful we’ve been in working to change the world we eat in.”

—Michel Nischan, Founder & CEO
Financials

REVENUE GROWTH by YEAR

2015 REVENUE

Foundation Grants
$2,249,983

Corporate
$1,278,821

Earned Income
$274,488

Government
$1,208,817

Private Gifts
$108,742

2015 EXPENSES

Programs
$4,163,038

Fundraising
$507,858

General & Admin
$569,540
up to $999

Dory Adams
Marc Alborghetti
Ameriprise Financial, Inc.
Anonymous
  In honor of Fiona McBride
Anonymous
  In honor of Rebecca Mandell
Anonymous (7)
Penny Archambeault
Debra Aring
Christopher Becerra
Ruth Belzer
  In honor of Judith Belzer's birthday
David and Lucille Bowen
Ellen Bowen
Richard and Courtney Bradley
William C. Briggs
Alice Bruhl
Willie Buehler
Cheryl Carlesimo
Robert Choo
The Cocktail Club
Gary and Carolyn Cohen
Julia O. Cohen
Cecilia Coloma
James Comiskey
Linden and Ryan Cruse
The David & Eleanore Rukin Philanthropic Foundation
Griffin Davis
Kenneth Davis
Jane K. Dean
  In honor of Julie Norman, Dana Anderson, and Joan Adibi
Mark Deviney
Lynn Dimmick
Bill and Lisa Donnelly
Kyle Esecon Trust
Fairfield County Community Foundation
Fitts Family Foundation
Ann Freeman
Liz G.
Ellen D. Gallo
  Daniel Garnaas Holmes
  Erin Garnaas-Holmes
  Jonathan Garnaas-Holmes
  Steve Garnaas-Holmes
  Betsy Garside
  Christine L. Gavitt
  Tasha Gemma
  Andrew and Myra Goodman
  Cecile Gorham
  Jenifer Gorin
  Ann and George Gray
  Annette Green
  John Greene
  Donna and David Grossman
  Ivan and Marilyn Hametz
  Brian Hampton
  Rebecca Harnik
  Julia Harris
  Ana Henriques
  Alan and Janet Hertzmark
    In honor of Andrew Hertzmark
  Tim Holmes
  Thomas J. Hook
  Latifa Howard
  Alan Hunt
  Francis Janik
  Lars Johansson
  Nicole Johnson
  The Jorgenson Family
  Shannon Jorgensen
  William Jorgenson
  Sheila Datt Kash
  Lawrence J. Kaufman
    and Mary L. McNeel
  Peter Ketchum
  Jonathan Kittaka
  Mary and Chris Kliesmet
  Kipen Kolesinskas
  Rachel Konstantin
  KPMG
  Howard Leibowitz
    In honor of Gus Schumacher
  Fred Lines
  Lauren LoPrete
  Rebecca Mandell
  Kaitlin Marinelli
  Jacquie Marumoto and Larry Perlstein
  The Mayes Family
  Eileen and John McBride
  Kate McBride
  Joan D. McManus
  Mary and James Megson
  Katie Merritt
  Francis Miller
  Jon T. Nelson
  Peg North
  Sarah O'Brien
  Out of the Box Collective, Inc.
  Carol Parker
  Katherine Penrose
  Alicia and Michael Perry
  Annie Pettry
  Nicole Piper
  Ken and Sanne Powell
  David Rashy
  The Robinson Family
    In honor of Rebecca Mandell
  Susan Rothwell
  Erica Ryland
  Nena Salazar
  Michael Schmale
  Ellen Schumacher Schadegg
  Gus and Susan Schumacher
  Joseph P. Scordato
  Laurel Scheck
  Katherine Siegal
  Kathleen M. Skolnik
  Soul Stew
  Ursula Strong
    In honor of my mom, Emma
  Kerry Stubbs
  The Thibault Family
  James A. Thomas
  Katie Thomas
  Michelle Thompson
  Tufts Health Plan
This is one of the best, positively impactful programs to reach our community. It supports local farmers and puts more dollars directly into our local economy. This is a win-win-win. The program is far better than any food pantry program. I am proud to see how the dollars spent are directly funding small businesses and fostering relationships between farmers and the people who eat their food.

–Sam K., a SNAP shopper at the Webb City Farmers Market, Missouri
Our Board

Michel Nischan  
Founder & CEO

Gus Schumacher  
Board Consultant  
Founding Board Chair

Andrew Hertzmark  
Board Chair

Ariane Batterberry  
Board Member

Melissa Ho  
Board Member

Tom Colicchio  
Board Member

José Andrés  
Board Member

Stephan Nygren  
Board Member

Karen Watson  
Board Member

Kirk Posmantur  
Board Member

Ellen Marram  
Board Member

We would also like to thank Adrienne Farrar Houël and Ben Lilienthal for their service on the board in 2015.